

NSC BRIEFING

8 September 1954

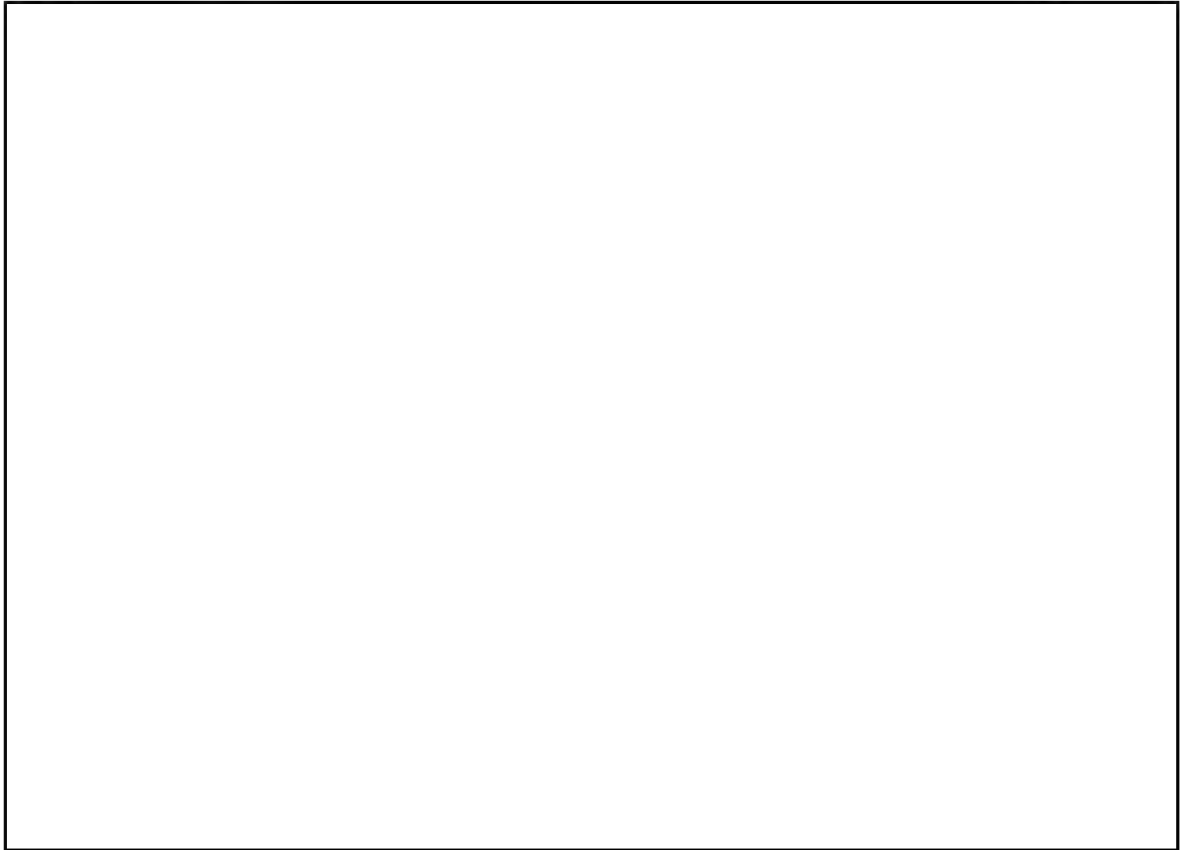
SITUATION IN SOUTH KOREA

NSA review completed

- I. The next two to three months, because of the pending troop withdrawal program, may be the most critical to date in US-South Korean relations.
  - A. Rhee is resentful and emotionally disturbed over the failure of his Washington visit.
  - B. He had hoped to persuade the US to renew the war, or alternatively, to provide him with greatly increased military forces.
  - C. He wanted to redirect American policy away from a strong Japan as the foundation of the American position in the Western Pacific.
  - D. He is angry over the withdrawal, which he characterizes as "abandonment."

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III. Since his return, Rhee has adopted more contentious and independent policies.

- A. He has publicly attacked several American officials, the US troop deployment program, the military and economic aid program, and SEAP.
- B. Secretary Dulles has been criticized as subservient to the British and French, officially inspired rumors allege that he is pro-Japanese, and on 1 September the official Korean press has accused the Secretary of working to embrace Mao Tse-tung.

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D. Rhee and his ministers have publicly disparaged American efforts to form a SEAP which excludes South Korea and includes Britain and France.

IV. Official statements and press comments on South Korean-Japanese differences have recently become so provocative as to preclude successful negotiations of outstanding differences.

A. During the last few days, armed Korean occupation of the Liancourt Rocks, which is also claimed by the Japanese, was announced in a deliberately provocative manner. In order to recover lost prestige at home, it is possible Rhee will seek to provoke a clash at sea with Japan, in which they have an advantage because of relative air superiority.

ROK maritime police not under UNC.

V. On 1 September, South Korea informed the US that Korea has decided to ask the neutral nations supervisory commission (NNSC) to leave within one week of notification. No date set for notification.

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A. Prior to his departure for the US, Rhee instructed his provost marshal general to take measures to eject the NNSC. Incipient violence curbed as a result of American urging at the time of Rhee's visit.

B. If the South Korean government now chooses to act through unofficial patriotic groups, it will be virtually impossible to insure absolute security to the commission members.

VI. It remains possible that these threatening developments are primarily designed for psychological pressure on the United States government, to gain his objectives.

A. The developments are particularly disturbing, however, because his present resentful, agitated mood could result in dangerous and irrational conduct.

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